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TEXT-BOOK

A History of the United States for Schools. By Andrew C. McLaughlin, A.M., LL.B., Head of the Department of History, University of Chicago; and Claude Halstead Van Tyne, Ph.D., Head of the Department of American History, University of Michigan. (New York, D. Appleton and Company, 1911, pp. 430, lxviii.) The demand for better text-books for the teaching of American history in the grammar schools is shown unmistakably by the publication during the past year or two of seven or eight new volumes in this field. Nearly all these show certain well-marked tendencies: increased attention to the national period, to the significance of the westward movement, to social and economic factors, to geographical influences, to European "backgrounds", to securing adaptability to the actual conditions of school work without sacrifice of scholarly accuracy. The new books have each attained more or less success in several of these respects, but they have represented efforts to perfect an established kind of educational apparatus rather than the evolution of a new one.

The volume by Professors McLaughlin and Van Tyne belongs to this group, and on the whole none of its predecessors has met the problem more successfully. To write a good epitome is always a difficult task; to accomplish it successfully and at the same time to adapt the material to the understanding of children, in content and treatment as well as in style, is an undertaking whose seriousness can be fully realized only by those who have attempted it. In the present case the results are uneven. In the chapters dealing with the colonies and the Revolution remarkable success has been achieved; nothing better has been done, probably nothing as good, in any other text. The national period (perhaps because it is more complex and difficult) has been handled with noticeably less success; the chapter on the Making of the Constitution is particularly abstract and generalized. But at many points the topics of the second part have been treated in a concrete and interesting manner, and this portion of the book will bear comparison with the corresponding part of similar books. It is, in fact, remarkable that university men without experience in grade teaching should be able, even with the advice of elementary-school teachers, to produce a book which is on the whole so admirably adapted to its purpose as this.

A high level is maintained as to accuracy, a result to be expected, since the equipment of two such competent scholars is, unhappily, seldom applied to the problem of preparing a text-book for the elementary school. But probably no volume covering so much ground can escape a few minor inaccuracies at least, and there are in this case more than a score of errors, questionable assertions, and general statements that are

misleading because of over-brevity. There is space for the citation of only a few: the search for a fountain of youth was an incidental rather than a primary object of Ponce de Leon's search (p. 16); Cartier spent the winter of 1535-1536 at the site of Quebec, not Montreal (p. 21); the treaty of Tordesillas, 1494, of course did not mention either "Brazil" or "the rest of America" (p. 28); the legislative power of the Virginia House of Burgesses was not limited to assenting to laws made by the company in England (p. 47); Penn should be given full credit for his philanthropic motives, as he is (p. 86), but he was also a very shrewd business man; in the account of colonial government (p. 130) the old classification with the misleading term "charter colony" is adopted, rather than the much better one suggested by Professor Osgood; fear of the French fleet had at least as much to do with Clinton's evacuation of Philadelphia in 1778 as did the discovery that there was "nothing to be gained" by holding it (p. 179); on page 190 appears the most surprising slip in the book, the statement that Cowpens (tactically the most brilliant American victory of the war, for Morgan surrounded and captured the superior force of Tarleton) was "lost by Greene"! Perry's force in the battle of Lake Erie was superior to that of the British in tonnage, men, and weight of broadside; it is hardly correct to say that Clay "was not decided either way" about the annexation of Texas (p. 305), in view of the Raleigh letter; the authors state that Lincoln did not carry Massachusetts in 1860 (p. 330).

It is, unfortunately, exceptional for any school text, of either Northern or Southern authorship, to be free from sectional bias. In spite of very obvious efforts to be fair, the authors have not concealed strong Northern sympathies on virtually every point. "Our" and "us" are used of things Northern, and "rebels" and "rebellion" are terms freely used in referring to the South. In treating the military events of the Civil War, generous tribute is paid to Lee and to the valor of the Southern soldier; yet when it comes to details the authors find space for twelve lines of enthusiasm over the charge of Thomas's men at Missionary Ridge while hardly the same number of words are given to Pickett's men at Gettysburg and the impression is left that the latter were repulsed because the Federal troops opposing them were better soldiers; Sheridan's exploits in riding around Lee's diminished army are chronicled, while no mention is made of "Jeb" Stuart whose attentions to McClellan are said to have caused Lincoln to remark that "three times round are out"; Thomas at Chickamauga gets fourteen lines, Jackson at Chancellorsville not one word. Such features will not promote the use of the book in Southern schools.

Fanciful pictures are almost wholly excluded, and nearly all of those included are of real value in illustrating the text. The picture on page 120 does not show the heights that Wolfe scaled. The maps and plans are also good as a rule, being clear and unencumbered by useless detail. Some of them, however, are too small or too much broken up; for

instance, the two maps for the French and Indian War (pp. 118-119) would be much more effective if combined and enlarged. Most of the section topics have been happily phrased, but it is a mistake to use the "run-in", black-type heads instead of a less conspicuous "cut-in" head which would serve the same purpose without interrupting the narrative. Foot-notes have been effectively used for much that is interesting and useful. Quotations from what is commonly called "source material" are inserted to good advantage, but the child's legitimate and laudable curiosity will not be satisfied by such terms as: "wrote one of their leaders", "England's greatest general declared", etc. (pp. 43, 140, 160, 208, 285). Although in some details the arrangement may be criticised, the book strikes a fair average between topical and chronological demands and its organization of material may be commended.

J. MONTGOMERY GAMBRILL.

COMMUNICATION

BUFFALO, N. Y., July 27, 1912.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW:

Dear Sir,

The July issue of the REVIEW contains a notice of my *Studies of the Niagara Frontier*, in which the reviewer undertakes to correct my spelling of "Dallion". Permit me to state that in using that spelling I have followed the priest's own signature as found in a letter to a friend in Paris dated at "Tonachain, Huron village, this 18th July, 1627", and signed, "Joseph de la Roche Dallion".

FRANK H. SEVERANCE.